## REDUCTION OF POSTAGE.

The Senate, as in Committee of the Whole, proceeded the consideration of the bill to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States, and to provide for the coinage three cent piece.

Mr. RUSK. I propose, with the assent of the conthat the amendments which they have offered to the House bill be rejected, and then I will offer a substitute for the whole

The question was taken on the amendments all together, and they were rejected.

Mr. RUSK then offered an amendment us a substitute for the bill, viz.

"Strike out all after the enacting clause, and insert-That from and after the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hu dred and fifty-one, in lieu of the rates of postage now estab-lished by law, there shall be charged the following rates, to wit: For every single letter in manuscript or paper of any kind upon which information shall be asked for or communi-cated in writing, or by marks or signs, conveyed in the mails, for my distance within the United States, three cents, when for any distance within the United States, three cents, when the postage apon such letter shall have been prepaid, and five cents when the postage thereon shall not have been prepaid; for every such angle letter or paper when conveyed wholly or in part by sea, and to, from, or through a foreign country, for any distance over twenty-five hundred miles, fifteen cents, and for any distance under twenty-five hundred miles, ten cents; (excepting, however, all cases where such postages have been or shall be adjusted at different rates by postal treaty or convention already concluded or hereafter to be made;) and for a double letter there shall be charged double the rates above vention already concluded or hereafter to be made;) and for a couble letter there shall be charged double the rates above a specified; and for a troble letter, treble those rates; and for a quadruple letter, quadruple those rates; and every letter or parcel not exceeding half an ounce in weight shall be deemed a single letter, and every additional weight of half an ounce, or additional weight of leasthan half an ounce, shall be charged with an additional single postage; and all drop-letters, or letters placed in any post office not for transmission but for delivery only, shall be charged with postage at the rate of one cent each; and all letters which shall be reafter be advertised a remaining over or uncalled for in any post office, shall be cent each; and all letters which shall hereafter be advertised as remaining over or uncalled for in any post office, shall be charged with one cent in addition to the regular postage, both to be accounted for as other postages now are; and the Postmaster General shall be and he is hereby authorized, whenever the reverme of the Post Office Department shall have exceeded the expenditures by more than five per cent. for one fiscal year, to reduce the postage on letters conveyed any distance within the United States to two cents the single rate when such postage shall be premid.

fiscal year, to reduce the postage on letters conveyed any distance within the United States to two cents the single rate when such postage shall be prepaid.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That all newspapers not exceeding two ounces in weight, sent from the office of publication to actual and bona fide subscribers, shall be charged with postage as follows, to wit: The postage on the regular on numbers of a newspaper published weekly, for any distance mot exceeding fifty miles, shall be five cents per quarter; for any distance exceeding three hundred miles, shall be five cents per quarter; for any distance exceeding three hundred miles, and not exceeding one thousand miles, fifteen cents per quarter; for any distance exceeding one thousand miles, and not exceeding four thousand miles, twenty-five cents per quarter; for any distance exceeding two thousand miles, and not exceeding four thousand miles, twenty-five cents per quarter; for any distance exceeding two thousand miles, thirty cents per quarter; and papers published semi-weekly shall be charged double those rates; tri-weekly treble those rates; and oftener than tri-weekly five times those rates. And there shall be charged upon every other newspaper, and each circular not sealed, handbill, engraving, pamphlet, periodical, magazine, hook, and every other description of printed matter, awhich shall be unconnected with any manuscript or written matter, and which it may be lawful to transmit through the mail, of no greater weight than one onnee, for any distance not exceeding three hundred miles, one cent; and for each addiditional onnee or fraction of an onnee one cent; for any distance exceeding three hundred miles, one cent; and for each addiditional onnee or fraction of an onnee one cent; for any distance exceeding three hundred miles, one on thousand miles, one of the control of the cent of the control of the cent of the tance exceeding three bundred miles, and not exceeding one thousand miles, double those rates; for any distance exceeding one thousand miles, and not exceeding two thousand miles, treble those rates; for any distance exceeding two thousand miles, and not exceeding three thousand miles, four times those rates; for any distance exceeding three thousand miles, and not exceeding four thousand miles, five times those rates; for any distance exceeding four thousand miles six times those rates. Bound books not weighing over thirty-two ounces shall be deemed mailable matter under the provisions of this section. And the Postmaster General shall require regular subscribers to periodicals, who receive the same by mail, and on which the postage shall not have been prepaid, to pay the amount of one quarter's postage in advance, and the postage on which the postage shall not have been prepaid, to pay the amount of one quarter's postage in advance, and the postage on all printed matter, other than newspapers and periodicals, published at intervals not exseeding three months, and sent from the office of publication to actual and bona fide subscribers, to be prepaid; and in ascertaining the weight of newspapers for the purpose of determining the amount of postage chargeable thereon, they shall be weighed when in a dry state. And whenever any printed matter on which the postage is required by this section to be prepaid shall, through the inattention of postmasters or otherwise, be sent without prepayment, the same shall be charged with double the amount of postage which would have been chargeable thereon if the postage had been prepaid; but nothing in this act contained shall subject to postage any matter which is exempted from the payment of postage by any existing law. And the Postmaster General, by and with the advice and consent of the President of the United States, shall be, and he is hereby, authorized to reduce or enlarge, from time to time, the rates of postage upon all letters and other mailable matter conveyed between the United States and any foreign country, for the purpose of making better postal arrangements with and it shall be their duty, to remove the wrappers and envelopes from all printed matter and pamphlets not charged with letter postage, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is upon or connected with any such printed matter, or in such package, any matter or thing which would authorize or require the charge of a higher rate of postage thereon. And all publishers of pamphlets, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers which shall not exceed sixteen ounces in weight, shall be allowed to interchange their publications reciprocally, free of postage: Provided, That such interchange shall be confined to a single copy of each publication: And provided, also, That said publishers may enclose in their publications the bills for subscriptions thereto, without any additional charge for postage.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful to coin at the mint of the United States and its branches a piece of the denomination and legal value of three cents, or three-hundredths of a dollar, to be composed of three-fourths silver and one-fourth copper, and to weigh twelve grains and three-eighths of a grain; that the said coin shall bear such devices as shall be conspicuously different from those of the other silver coins, and of the gold dollar, but having the inscription "United States of America," and its denomination and date; and that it shall be a legal tender in payment of debts for all sums of thirty cents and under.

and that it shall be a legal tender in payment of debts for all sums of thirty ents and unexceed. That it shall be the description of the control of the con Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That it shall be the duty neral to provide and turnish to all deputy

see to which such letters would be hable if sent by mail, and such postage stamps and envelopes not having been before used,) may be sent, conveyed, and delivered otherwise than by post or mail, notwithstanding any prohibition thereof under any existing law: Provided, That the said envelope shall be daly scaled, and the same duly directed and addressed, and the same duly directed and addressed, and the date of such letter, or of the receipt or transmission thereof, written or stamped, or otherwise appear on such envelope.

And if any person shall use or attempt to use, in prepayment of postage, any postage stamp which shall have been before used for like purpose, such person shall be subject to a pensity of fifty dollars for every such offence, to be recovered in the name of the United States in any court of competent juris Sec. 7. And be it further enacted, That lists of letters re

diction.

Sec. 7. And be it further enacted. That lists of letters remaining uncalled for in any post office in any city, town, or village where a new spaper shall be printed, shall hereafter be published once only in the newspaper which, being issued weekly or oftener, shall have the largest circulation within the range of delivery of said office, to be decided by the postmaster at such office, at such times and under such regulations as the Postmaster General shall prescribe; and at a charge of one cent for each letter advertised. And the postmaster at such office is hereby directed to post in a conspicuous place in his office a copy of such list, on the day or day after the publication thereof; and if the publisher of any such paper shall refuse to publish the list of letters as provided in this section, the postmaster may designate some other paper for such purpose. Such lists of letters shall be published once in every six weeks, and as much oftener, not exceeding once a week, as the Postmaster General may specially direct: Provided, That the Postmaster General may in his discretion direct the publication of German and other foreign letters in any newspaper printed in the German or any other foreign language, which publication shall be either in lieu of or in addition to the publication of the list of such letters in the manner first in this section provided, as the Postmaster General shall direct.

Sec. 8. And be it further enacted. That the Postmaster General be authorized to contract or make other arrangements for the transportation of mails of the United States through any foreign country, and also for the transportation by such transient or other vessels as may be running between ports of the United States and foreign ports, or between foreign ports, in cases where there are no arrangements therefor, and to provide for the collection of such postages on such letters and other mails be matter as may be sent under such arrangements and contracts, as may be due to the United States, either by prepayment

any treaty of the United States.

Sec. 9. And be it further enacted, That to any postmaster whose commissions may be reduced below the amount allowed at his office for the year ending the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, the Postmaster General shall be authorized, in his discretion, to allow such additional commissions as he may deem just and proper: Provided, That the whole amount of commissions allowed such postmaster during any fiscal year shall not exceed by more than twenty per cent. the amount of commissions at such office for the year ending the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-one.

Sec. 10. And be it further enacted, That no post office now in existence shall be discontinued, nor shall the mail service on any mail route in any of the States or Territories be discontinued or diminished, in consequence of any diminution of the revenues that may result from this act; and it shall be the duty of the Postmaster General to establish new post offices, and place the mail service on any new mail routes established, or that may hereafter be established, in the same manner as though this act had not passed.

Sec. 11. And be it further enacted, That there shall be paid to the Post Office Department, in further payment and compensation for the mail service performed for the two Houses of Congress and the other departments and officers of the Government, in the transportation of free matter, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars per year, which shall be paid quarterly, out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Sec. 12. And be it further enacted, That there is hereby

Sec. 12. And be it further enacted, That there is hereb

Sec. 12. And be it further enacted, That there is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of one million of dollars to supply any deficiency that may arise in the Post Office Department.

Sec. 13. And be it further enacted, That the Secretary of the Treasury shall be and he is hereby authorized to appoint and employ in the office of the Auditor for the Post Office Department such additional clerks as shall be found necessary in such office in consequence of the passage of this act, not exceeding eight in all, and at such salaries as he may think proper, not exceeding fourteen hundred dollars per annum for one-half of such clerks and twelve hundred dollars per annum for the residue thereof; which salaries, until the close of the next fiscal year, shall be paid quarterly, out of any money in the treasury not other wise appropriated.

Sec. 14. And be it further enacted, That the Postmaster General shall be and he is hereby authorized to appoint and employ such additional clerks in the Post Office Department, in not exceeding eight in all, as shall be found necessary in such

eding eight in all, as shall be found necessary in su not exceeding eight in all, as shall be found necessary in such department in consequence of the passage of this act, at such salaries, not exceeding fourteen hundred dollars per year for one-half of such clerks, and twelve hundred dollars per year for the other half, as may appear to said Postmaster General to be just and expedient; which salaries, until the close of the next fiscal year, shall be paid quarterly, out of any moneys in the treasure per otherwise appropriated. the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Mr. CLAY. I beg leave to make a suggestion, with

view to facilitate business. Let us, by general consent, adop the substitute, with the power of amending it afterwards, and let it be considered as if it were the original bill.

The PRESIDENT. If such is the pleasure of the Senate

that course will be pursued.

Mr. GWIN. I am entirely in favor of the original bi and opposed to the amendment. I hope the original bill wil not be stricken out.

Mr. SEWARD. I think with the Senator from Califor

nia. Of the two bills I am decidedly in favor of the Hous The PRESIDENT. Then the question will be on th mendment. d Mr. RUSK. I will modify my amendment by striking out

the following provision from the first section : 

> It has been objected that this clause gave too much power to the Postmaster General, and power rather of a legislativ character. And it has also been suggested that he might re duce the mail service in order to reduce the postage. I have no fears on that score at all; but I modify my amendment i

this way to obviate all objections of that sort.

Mr. SEWARD. I desire to submit an amendment to the amendment in the second section. It is one to which I pre That said publishers may enclose in their publications the bills for subscriptions thereto, without any additional charge for postage.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful to coin at the mint of the United States and its branches a piece. ion through the mail of the daily commercial news papers. I have ascertained that the effect of the provision will be to cut off two commercial papers, and as I presume the desire of the committee was to be equal and just, I move to strike out " two ounces" and insert " three ounces.

> Mr. SEWARD. I move to make the same alteration ne second section of the bill as it came from the House.

The amendment was agreed to.

The amendment was agreed to. Mr. SEWARD. I move to amend the proposed substitute, in the first section, by striking out the words "three cents when the postage upon such letter shall have been prepaid, and five cents when the postage thereon shall not have been,"

offered were put io, to state that he is of opinion that it is absolutely necessary to adopt the system of one rate for prepared of every postmaster to cause to be defaced, is such manner as the Postmaster General shall direct, all postage stamps attached to letters deposited in his office for delivery or to be sent by mail; and it any postmaster sending letters in the mail with postage stamps attached shall omit to deface the same, it shall be the duty of the postmaster to whose office such letters shall be sent for delivery to deface the stamps and report the delinquent postmaster to the Postmaster General. proposed by the honorable Senator from New York. Another

is, that it will very greatly reduce the amount of the revenue.

One thing which I have had in view in preparing my amendment has been to keep the receipts of the department as near as possible to its expenditures. I feel satisfied from the examination I have given the subject, in connexion with the Postmaster General—for I deemed it proper to consult with Postmaster General—for I deemed it proper I consult with him, and also with postmasters of experience—that, under the provisions of the substitute I have offered, the revenues of the department will meet the expenditures. I will read to the Senate a communication which I received from the Postmaster General on this subject:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, JANUARY 29, 1851.

Sin: In accordance with your suggestion and of my own convictions of duty, I have attentively considered the "Act to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States and to provide for the coinage of a three cent piece," which lately passed the House of Representatives, and now propose, as requested by you in our interview of this morning, to state my views in regard to some of the provisions of that act.

Before doing so, it is proper state that it is not my purpose to oppose the passage of this or any other act which may meet the deliberate approval of the Senate or House of Representatives, and that in suggesting objections or amendments I do so with due respect for the House of Representatives, and in the belief that the members of that House, "If the subject is again presented to their consideration, will generally approve POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, JANUARY 29, 1851.

again presented to their consideration, will generally appro-

my suggestions.

I desire also, in justice to myself, to state my views in regal to the reduction of the revenue which will be caused by the passage of the bill in its present form, beyond the reduction which would result from the reduced rates of postage recommendation. which would result from the reduced rates of postage recommended in the last annual report from this department. If I should omit to do this, the effects of the reduction proposed by the House bill might create an impression that the opinions expressed in that report, in reference to the effect of the reductions there recommended, were erronsous and deceptive. In doing this no disrespect is intended to those members of the House who advocated a still further reduction. The head of an Executive department which, ever since the organization of the Government, has been conducted upon the principle that it should sustain itself, ought not, perhaps, to urge a departure from that principle, while members of Congress may well consider whether the benefits accruing to their constituents and the country by an extreme reduction of the rates of postage will not justify them in securing such benefits by a large annual appropriation from the treasury.

arge annual appropriation from the treasury.

The House having deliberately fixed the rate of inland let The House having deliberately fixed the rate or inland letter postage at three cents the single rate, without regard to prepayment, I propose to say in reference to this feature of the bill that the experienced financial officer of this department, after a most careful examination, estimates an increased reduction in the revenues of the department for the next fiscal year of \$700,000 over and above the reduction which would have been caused by reducing our inland letter postage to five cents the single rate when unpaid, and three cent when prepaid.

the next fiscal year, by the adoption of a uniform three cent rate for California and Oregon, of \$290,000 beyond the re-duction which would have been caused by the reduction of letter postage to and from Oregon and California to one-half

While I would recommend a very large reduction of the present letter postage to and from California and Oregon, I feel it my duty to state that the great expense of our ocean lines, and the extraordinary cost of transportation across the Isthmus and in California, not only justify but require an increased rate of postage on these long routes. Unless this fea-ture of the bill is changed we shall have is rates of postage from New York and New Orleans to Caba 123 cents; to Chagres 20 cents; to Panama 30 cents, and to Califo and Oregon (notwithstanding the greatly increased distance) only 3 cents.

make arrangements for the transportation of the mail to places in foreign countries by transient vessels or otherwise, and

for that purpose to employ our consuls as special agents.

Great commercial advantages might result from an arrangement for the transportation of the mails from Chagres and Panama along the Atiantic and Pacific coasts of South America, which might perhaps be accomplished by transient ves-sels or otherwise, at a moderate cost, though the agency of our consuls.

The propriety of fixing more uniform rates of sea postage The propriety of fixing more uniform rates of sea postage was referred to in the annual report from his department; and to the suggestions there made you are isspectfully referred. The different rates now established are wratiously numerous and complicated—some with and some without inland postage added. No rates of postage are established to many points to which it would be desirable to make arrangements to send our mails, while rates are established to points of less importance sometimes in the same vicinity. For instance, the act of March 3d, 1845, establishes a rate of sea postage "between any ports of the United States and the ports of England or France, or any other foreign port not less than three thouor France, or any other foreign port not less than three thou-sand miles distant," but omits to establish a general rate to foreign ports not three thousand miles distant from the United States. The same act establishes the rates of postage "be-tween the ports of the United States and any of the West India islands or islands in the Gulf of Maxica." but establishes India islands or islands in the Gulf of Mexico," but establishes no rates of postage to Mexican ports or the main land adjoining that Guif.

It is proper also to remark that the first section, as it now stands, probably abolishes the franking privilege of all mem-bers of Congress, officers of the Government, and others. If all letters are to be charged with postage, the privilege of franking letters must necessarily cease.

The provision in regard to the compensation of postmesters should be amended. The practical execution of the provision in its present form would be difficult if not imposible. It certainly is not intended to give postmasters their full com-missions, precisely as though all the letters hereafter sent through the mails were charged with postage at the old rates. for the increase in the number of letters would soon be such as to increase to an unreasonable amount the commission that would be allowed by such a construction. To fix the compensation at the compensation of the last or present year would not accord with the true construction of the act, for there is a natural increase in the number of letters offrom ten to fifteen per cent. per year. Nor would it be just to fix their compensation at the compensation at the same offices for the present year, for the business at all the offices is subject to freezent year, for the business at all the offices is subject to fluctuation, and some two thousand new offices will probably be established during the present year. Nor does this provision afford a remedy for the whole difficulty. There are numerous offices where the compensation or salary of the postmaster is fixed by law, and where the clerks have heretofore been paid (and generally not very liberally paid) out of the surplus left of the commissions, after paying the other ex-penses and the postmaster's salary. These offices are all important to the service, and it is indispensably necessar that due provision should be made for the just compensation that due provision should be made for the just compensation of the clerks employed in them. The better mode of meeting the whole difficulty would seem to be to authorize the Postmaster General (perhaps for the next fiscal year only, or until Congress shall otherwise order) to increase the commissions now allowed to postmasters, to enable him to make an additional allowance for clerk hire, under such limitations and restrictions as may be prescribed by Congress or the Postrestrictions as may be prescribed by Congress or the Post-master General. These commissions should then be disburs-

The rates of postage on printed matter, and especially on bound books, at least for great distances, as fixed by the House bill, are too low for the interests of the department. There is resson to fear that the large increase of printed matter produc-ed by this bill will overburden our mails and more than quadruple the failures and irregularities now so much complain of, and which are to a great extent caused by the enormous weight of the printed matter (free and chargeable) now sent by mail. If there is an increase, as great as may perhaps be anticipated, the present horseback service on numerous mail routes will be required to be raised to two horse coach service, and two horse to four horse coach service, thus requiring an enormous increase of our expenditures for transportation.

If the department is to assume the business of express companies and other common carriers, it should be allowed to

graduate its prices at least in respect to distance. It will at once be perceived that with the uniform rate fixed by this act once be perceived that with the uniform rate fixed by this act the department will only be allowed to carry over long or expensive routes, when private expresses cannot profitably do it at the post office rates. From Houlton in the State of Maine, to Santa Fe in New Mexico, from St. Paul in Minnesots, to San Francisco in California, the Post Office Department must carry reprints of novels and other books, and other printed matter, at the rate of fifteen cents a pound, while no private express would undertake to carry the same in parcels of one hundred pounds at five times that rate.

Prepaid magazines (and what will not be a magazine if this bill names ?) are to be carried at seven and a half cents or less that the control of the same of th

bill passes?) are to be carried at seven and a half cents or less per pound from Philadelphia to San Francisco, while the privale expresses charge sixty-five cents per pound for package of one hundred pounds from New York to San Francisco The department pays from eighteen to twenty cents a pound for the cost of the transportation of this matter across the Isth-mus alone, and, after allowing the fifty per cent. commissions to the postmasters, it gets but 3\frac{3}{4} cents per pound for carrying it the whole distance from Philadelphia, by the way of New

York, to San Francisco.

Our present semi-monthly mails which cross the Isthmus from the Atlantic to the Pacific, will it is believed soon exceed ten thousand pounds in weight, or more than twenty thousand pounds a month, and their weight under this bill will depen to a great extent upon the quantity of books and other printed matter, not weighing more than thirty ounces each, which the booksellers and dealers of San Francisco can sell at the reducbooksellers and designs of oan r rancisco can sell at the reduc-ed prices they can put on them, when carried in the mail at one-fourth the freight now charged by private expresses.

The provisions of the second section would seem to embrace printed circulars, and reduce the postage of those not weighing

more than two ounces from the present rate of three cents prepaid to one cent, without regard to prepayment. If there is to be any such reduction, it would be better to make it only when at least five hundred are put in an office at the same time, and prepaid by stamps, which should be authorized for

If this section is to stand as it is, ALL "newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, magazines, books, and every other description of printed matter" are to be charged with postage, thus cutting off all free exchanges, and other free printed mat-

phlets, periodicals, magazines, books, and every other description of printed matter" are to be charged with postage, thus cutting off all free exchanges, and other free printed matter, except the free circulation of papers in the immed ate neighborhood of the office of publication.

The fourth section should be amended so as to make it penal to "use or sell" forged stamps, or to have them in possession with intent to sell them, either as true or faise. It should also be made penal for the engraver or any other person to print these stamps, except under the order of the department, or to deliver any stamps when so printed, except to the regularly appointed agent of the department. A pecuniary penalty should also be imposed for using, or attempting to use, such stamps for the prepayment of postage after they have been once used for that purpose.

In case the Senate concludes to retain the franking privilege, there should be an enlarged permanent appropriation for

In case the Senate concludes to retain the franking privi-lege, there should be an enlarged permanent appropriation for the transportation of free matter, which appropriation should be considered as a part of the permanent revenue of the de-partment. In my judgment, this additional appropriation ought to be at least five hundred dollars per annum, which, with the \$200,000 now appropriated, would not more than equal the postage which could be charged on such matter, if it were not free. were not free.

The question of the largest circulation of newspapers applying for the advertisement of uncalled for letters ought to be decided by the local postmasters, and not by the Postmaster General. The Postmaster General might prescribe general re-gulations in regard to the matter, but, having done so, he ought not to be further burdened with these questions, except

n cases of appeal.

Printers should be paid for publishing lists of letters not called for according to the number of letters advertised, and not according to the number called for; but if the first is deemed unwise, the number "delivered," and not the number "called for," should regulate the compensation. A friend of the printer might "call" for them all, and refuse to ake any.

The Posimester General should have power to order a more requent publication at the larger offices. At New York, Soston, &c. the accumulation of uncalled for letters for six weeks would be so great as to interfere seriously with the bu-

inces of the office.

The provision intended to punish publishers for a refusal to nsert the advertisement does not appear to me either necessary r expedient.

If stamped envelopes were authorized to be furnished by

If stamped envelopes were authorized to be turnished by the Department, and letters enclosed in such envelopes, and properly directed, not exceeding the weight which might be sent insuch stamped envelopes as prepaid letters, were allowed to be carried on post routes and elsewhere by private expresto be carried on post routes and elsewhere by private expres-ses or otherwise, without incurring any penalty, the revenues of the Department would be increased by the arrangement. This would be a great convenience to persons residing in dif-erent places between which there is frequent communication by omnibuses, expresses, ferries, or railroad. Under such circumstances persons frequently send out of the mail, not for the purpose of saving postage, but because they cannot well wait for the results wail convenience. vait for the regular mail conveyance.

If this bill passes, it will greatly increase the number of etters and the labors of this department. Some provision

should therefore be made for the employment of additional clerks in this department and in the office of the Auditor for

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, Your obedient servant, N. K. HALL, Postmaster General.

Hon T. J. Rusk, Chairman of the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads, U. S. Senate P. S. I find, on reading the above since it was copied for my signature, that I have inadvertently omitted to state that he financial officer of the department estimates that the reduction of the revenue from postages on printed matter, which would result from the adoption of the House rates, would exceed by two hundred thousand dollars the reduction which would result from the adoption of the rates recommended in the last annual report from this department; thus making an aggregate difference against the department of one million one hundred and ninety thousand dollars for the next fiscal

Mr. RUSK continued : So far as I am concerned, I believe, Mr. RUSK continued: So far as I am concerned, I believe, as I reported to the Senate more than a year ago, that a uniform rate of letter postage of two cents, in all cases prepaid, will, in a very few years, yield sufficient revenue, especially if there were, as there should be, an appropriation out of the treasury for the use which the Government make of the Post Office Department, such as the franking of communications by members of Congress and heads of departments. So far as I am concerned, I am very willing that the treasury should defray the expenses of the department until a rate of two cents should be found adequate to support the department. I shall, therefore, vote for the amendment, though I felt it was due to the Postmaster General, whom I have found to be a very intelligent and indefstigable officer, to present his reasons for a least of the country and other sections of the Union. It would seem to me, therefore, that the amendment proposed by my honorable friend from Texas is a judicious amendment; that it is a safe and proper amendment; that under it the revenues of the department will probably be adequate to cover all the expenses; and therefore I am decidedly in favor of it, and not in favor of the bill as it came from the House, nor in favor of the amendment of the Senator from New York.

Mr. HAMLIN. I had made some investigation of this subject, and had prepared myself with certain figures, which the Government is obliged to incur in order to perform the service between those parts of the country and other sections of the Union. It would seem to me, therefore, the amendment; that the amendment; that it is a safe and proper amendment; that under it the revenues of the department will probably be adequate to cover all the expenses; and therefore I am decidedly in favor of it, and not in favor of the bill other sections of the Union. It would seem to me, therefore, the country and other sections of the Union. It would seem to every enterior the service between those parts of the country and othe telligent and indefatigable officer, to present his reasons for

cents, with prepayment in all cases. I feel, however, some little embarrassment when the department professes to have gone into the financial examination of this subject, and to as the lowest rate which the revenue of the Post Office Department will bear. I feel myself more friendly to a uniform rate, and to prepayment in all cases, and I am entirely convinced that when the country have once had a system of that ever been adopted. I am told that there are object ble. It portions of the country to such uniform rate, and requiring till comprepayment in all cases. That certainly is not applicable to my portion of the country. I would to-morrow, although some little confusion might grow out of it, be willing to adopt a uniform rate and dismiss all books from the post office. What is the operation of it? The post offices carry a currency of their own. They propose to issue stamps, and sell these stamps. They will sell them through persons they appoint, I suppose, and when any person therefore desires to prepay his letter—and if the law requires it, he must do it te buys a quantity of these stamps, he puts them upon the etters when he sends them to the post office, and it is as easily never go into circulation again.

on my own affairs, and not on his. I wish, increiore, to pay the postage both ways myself. Now, mark how easily it is done. I put a stamp on the letter which I write, and I put a stamp on the inside of the one which I send to my correspondent, and thus I pay the postage each way. Suppose it tor from New York has offered, because I believe within a a stamp on the inside of the one which I send to my correspondent, and thus I pay the postage each way. Suppose it is a double letter, we may have stamps of a double character, or, if you do not happen to have double or triple stamps, you simply put two or three single stamps on your letter. There is no inconvenience resulting from this currency. It works out the greatest possible convenience, and I think the country could adopt it with the greatest satisfaction. I know, as the honorable chairman of the Committee on Post Offices suggests, that if you suddenly stop the present system, and introduce a new system with which the public are unacquainted, some little inconvenience and confusion would follow. But it seems to be considered that no great change can be worked without some inconvenience. worked without some inconvenience.

Sir, I will not enter into the financial view of the subject

out our own experience has shown that when we reduce the rates the correspondence throughout the country increases; and we have every reason to believe, both from our own experience and the experience of other countries that have adopted a system of this sort, that the instant it is resorted to, and the country discover how cheaply they can command the post office service, correspondence increases, and you are indemnified in the revenue by the increased matter which passe through the office. There is every thing, in my judgment, to recommend a system of this sort, and to commend it to a fair and discreet trial in the country. I have been anxious, from the first efforts made here to reform postage rates, to change the rate of payments. I have been anxious to come at once to some system of this sort, and to some uniform rate, and I would insist on prepayment in all cases, and I would give the currency I have adverted to, in order to make it congive the currency I have adverted to, in order to make a consideration of the country would be satisfied with it. These are considerations which are impressed on my mind, and which I felt anxious to see embraced by the country. But I hope I felt anxious to see embraced by the country. But I hope the same process to go over again in relation to this whole matter. I think the public mind is already settled that if a system of very cheap postage can be supported that if a system of very cheap postage can be supported. opinion of the department and the condition of the finances, let the rate of three cents stand. The department say they will struggle with it and get on with it. I will meet them in will struggle with it and get on with it. I will meet them to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise. I do not see much to be spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise, for that seems to be the fashion of the spirit of compromise. I do not see much to be spirit of compromise, for the spirit of compromise the spirit of co to see a uniform rate of prepayment. I do not see much to recommend an increased rate on unpaid letters. What would be the effect? Suppose a man chooses to write to me, and does not pay the postage, although it may be on his own affairs and his own business; he is not punished. The recipient of the letter is punished; and that will turn out to be he case in about nine times out of ten. If you raise the rate on unpaid letters in order to inflict some slight penalty, you not elaborate upon them. I had looked into the subject careinflict it on the individual who takes the letter from the office instead of him who sends it. You inflict the penalty on the wrong man. You do not place the penalty on the right proposed reduction, but I do not design to trespass on the time wrong man. You do not place the penalty on the right shoulders; and I do not see much to recommend a system of that sort, nor do I perceive that there is any thing to recomstated only the reasons which will control me in the vote which I shall give.

T. F. JOHNSON, Superintendent.

Which I shall give.

Mr. DAYTON. I concurrentirely in the recommendations which is desirable to lower our rates of postage, keeping at the same time the standard sufficiently high to enable the department to approximate at least to support itself. We have been referred to the system of postage in Great Britain, where I believe postage is limited to one penny, which is equal to about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid.

T. F. JOHNSON, Superintendent.

The concurrentirely in the recommendations which is enable to constant a situation in the above institution by feb 18—cost it is desirable to lower our rates of postage, keeping at the same time the standard sufficiently high to enable the department to approximate at least to support itself. We have been referred to the system of postage in Great Britain, where I believe postage is limited to one penny, which is equal to about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid, and they have an addition for unpaid about two cents prepaid and the standard sufficiently high to enable the chamber, that it is desirable to lower our rates of postage, keeping at the engineering, can obtain a situation in the above institution and control and the properties of the chamber, that it is desirable to

postage of letters to a uniform rate of two cents. The bill from the House proposes a uniform rate of three cents, and makes an appropriation of no less than one million five hundred thousand dollars to make up any deficiency that there may be in the revenue of the Post Office Department in consequence of the reduction. The honorable Senator from Texas has proposed a substitute making the rates three cents for prepaid letters and five cents for unpaid letters. This, he tells us, will, in his judgment and in the judgment of the Postmaster General, be adequate to meet the expenses of the department, and therefore he does not propose any appropriation of a million and a half of dollars.

The honorable Senator from New York, however, now proposes the rate of two cents to be prepaid, but does not tell us what appropriation would be necessary in order to meet the deficiency in the revenues of the department which may the deficiency in the revenues of the department which may the deficiency of raising the amount to be paid

The honorable Senstor from New York, however, now proposes the rate of two cents to be prepaid, but does not tell us what appropriation would be necessary in order to meet the deficiency in the revenues of the department which may accrue in consequence of it. Undoubtedly it will be more than a million and a half of dollars. I presume it will be necessary, if we adopt the proposition of the honorable Senator from New York, to make an appropriation of not less than two millions of dollars in order to cover the deficiency that will certainly accrue in the revenues of the department. Por one, I am decidedly in favor of cheap postage on the one hand, and on the other I am for supporting the department out of the revenues that will accrue from postage on letters, newspapers, &c. I would not insist, however, in this business of reduction, that the revenues in the very first instance ness of reduction, that the revenues in the very first instance should be adequate to meet the expenses of the department. should be adequate to meet the expenses of the department. If we had reason to believe that they would become adequate within any reasonable period of time, I might be prepared to support the measure of reduction that is proposed by my honorable friend from New York. But I am not prepared to agree to this most enormous reduction. I do not believe that the revenues of the department would be adequate to support it for years to come at that rate. It must be recollected that our present postage is ten cents for a letter for any distance exceeding three hundred miles, and five cents for all distances under that. It is now proposed to bring down the postage on letters to the very low rate of two cents for any distance, no matter how great: not only for the transportation of letters no matter how great; not only for the transportation of letters within the United States; not only when the transportation of letters is by land, but also in all the cases where it is by sea. The rate will comprehend letters transmitted to Oregon and to California, where, I venture to say, the actual cost of transportation will be altogether more than the rate proposed by my honorable friend from New York. If we recur to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, which I now hold in my hand, we will find that for the next fiscal year the esti-mates of the deficit in the revenues of the Government are no less than \$865,966.19. To this he says is to be added the less than \$665,966.19. To this he says is to be added the interest on the stock to be issued in favor of Texas, and that amount of stock, as we all know, is ten millions of dollars; making the deficit estimated by the Secretary of the Treesury for the next fiscal year about a million and a half of dollars. Now, if we pass this bill as it comes to us from the House, we add another million and a half of dollars, making a deficit of three millions. And I venture to say that if we pass the bill from the House making those land warrants assignable which we have issued as bounties to those who have been engaged in the various wars of the country since the commencewhich we have issued as bounties to those who have been engaged in the various wars of the country since the commencement of the present century, we shall lose every dollar of revenue which is to accrue from the public lands, which in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury is estimated for ment of the present century, we shall lose every dollar of revenue which is to accrue from the public lands, which in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury is estimated for the next fiscal year at \$1,600,000. All that would be swept away; and then, if we pass this bill as it comes from the House, there is to be added an appropriation of a million and a half of dollars; and how much more is to be added in the event of the sweeping reduction proposed by the honorable Senator from New York, I know not. But I do not believe the treasury is in a condition to justify this most enormous reduction of poetage. I am in favor of cheap postage. I am in favor of cheap postage. I am in favor of a very considerable reduction, but I am for proceeding in this business of reduction with caution, making it no further than the condition of the treasury would authorize. It would seem to me that the measure proposed by my honorable friend from Texas is a proper measure—a reduction to three cents, in all cases where the postage is prepaid, and five cents where it is not prepaid; makingja distinction, as I believe the substitute does, between cases where the mails are transported by I and and where they are transported through a foreign country in part, and partly by sea; or, in other perform the service between those parts of the country and other sections of the Union. It would seem to me, therefore,

The further consideration of the bill was then postponed

subject, and had prepared myself with certain figures, which I desired to have presented to the Senate, or rather to state rate of three cents prepaid and five cents unpaid.

Mr. DAVIS, of Massachusetts. I should be very glad, for one, to see my way clear, to vote for a uniform rate of two one, to see my way clear, to vote for a uniform rate of two one, to see my way clear, to vote for a uniform rate of two one, to see my way clear, to vote for a uniform rate of two one, to see my way clear, to vote for a uniform rate of two ones, the contract of two ones, the long speeches. I lorego, therefore, the views which I proposed to present. But, inasmuch as I design to vote for the amendment which has been offered by the Senator from New York, I desire to state briefly the reasons which will control my vote.

rate, and to prepayment in all cases, and I am entirely convinced that when the country have once had a system of that description, and witnessed its beautiful workings, they will be entirely satisfied that it is altogether the best system that has I would not shrink from imposing a slight burden temporarily on the treasury for a good reason. In my judgment the department should pay for the services they receive, and until these very few years past, all matter which properly belonged to the General Government, as every Senator knows, was transmitted through the Post Office Department free of charge. Now, it is working no injustice to the people of the whole country for them to contribute to the support of this department, to pay for the postage of the General Government. Nor, is it working any injustice to them if we should ask of them to pay for what they have already received. Memorials have poured in upon us from every section of this letters when he sends them to the post office, and it is as easily done as to put a seal on a letter, or to wafer it. As soon as it reaches the post office they deface it at once, so that it can Office and Post Roads could tell us that. They are almost Now, sir, some persons have supposed there may be some inconvenience in doing this. There can be none at all among persons of business, among those accustomed to use the post offices, and there will not be the least inconvenience. I am desirous, for example, to write a letter to my correspondent on my own affairs, and not on his. I wish, therefore, to pay one may have asked, I believe almost uniformly, a rate of two cents prepaid postage. The substitute of the Senator from Texas are the proposes a rate of three like sands upon the sea-shore. They come from every hill-

low a rate as that which is in operation in Great Britain. The mercantile community, all classes of our people in fact, are as competent as the English to see the advantages of the cheap postage system. And whatever may be true of that system will be more than true here. The system that has been found to effect such great results there, may, in my opinion, be relied upon with the utmost safety here. I re-member, too, very well the humble part I took in effecting the reduction of postage in the other branch of the national legislature, when it was reduced from the old to the present rates; and I think I may say truly that precisely the same state of alarm existed then in the minds of those who were called upon to act in relation to cheap postage that now exists. That result has proved that low rates of postage, which did not at first yield a revenue adequate to the support of the

department, has already began to yield a surplus.

This bill originally proposed prospectively to give the Postmaster General power, whenever the revenues should sufficiently increase, to reduce the rate from three cents to two cents. But that provision has been stricken out. The bill then stands without any discretionary provision between the control of the contr tled, that if a system of very cheap postage can be supported in England, it can be supported here. And the evidence which is furnished to us in relation to our own recent reduc-

These are the reasons which will control my vote, but I will

ment here of the propriety of raising the amount to be paid on unpaid letters. It seems to me there is a propriety in that view of the case.

Although I would be willing, as a matter of experiment, to vote for the bill of the House, the amendment of the Senator from New York strikes me as anomalous in all its capacity.

Senator from New York strikes me as anomalous in all its aspects. His amendment is to reduce the rate of postage to two cents uniformly, and in the event of the money not being paid the letter is not to be carried. That I understand to be the amendment. It strikes me there are reasons which would suggest themselves to the mind of every one why it should not be adopted. Our business men in our commercial cities may soon adapt themselves to any rule or any standard we may choose to lay down, but it will be a very long time before the great masses, who are scattered from one extent of this great country to another, can adapt themselves to it. Besides, there is a positive propriety in permitting an individual to mail a letter on the business of another man, giving the man for whose benefit it is a right to pay. I write to a friend on my business. That friend, under the operation of this amendment, cannot answer my letter unless he, forscoth, pays the postage. No letter is to be carried, according to the amendment of the Senator from New York, unless he who mails it shall prepay the postage. It seems to me there are obvious objections to the adoption of that amendment. It is perfectly evident, from our past experience in this country, that all the business community will soon adapt themselves to any rule we think proper to lay down. If, therefore, we adopt a uniform system of three cents for prepaid letters, and five cents for unpaid letters, the commercial men will soon conform to it. They will very soon use the stamps referred to by the Senator from Massachusetts. We have seen this in the recent change which we have made. How many letters do we to it. They will very soon use the stamps referred to by the Senator from Massachusetts. We have seen this in the recent change which we have made. How many letters do we now receive that do not come in an envelope? And yet five years ago such a thing as an envelope was considered rather a luxury—something of an aristocracy. When correspondence was paid by the piece, that was the case; but since we changed the system, and correspondence is paid for by the weight, the whole business part of the community conform to it, and now there is hardly a letter that we receive that does not come in two pieces of paper—one the letter and the other not come in two pieces of paper—one the letter and the other an envelope. And if we adopt the system of permitting let-ters to be paid by postage stamps, business men will very soon

transported by land and where they are transported through a foreign country in part, and partly by sea; or, in other words, requiring, in the cases of California and Oregon, some addition to the rates, in consideration of the very great expense which the Government is obliged to incur in order to offered by the Senator from New York proposes to make too

and the Senate adjourned.

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incident to a college life.

The second term of the annual session opens on Monday, the 10th of February, and hereafter the annual session will regularly open on the second Monday of September, and close the last Friday in June. For further information address T. F. JOHNSON, Superintendent.